

The-
RICHMOND
REVIEW

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FREE

March 2004

Asian Representatives Urged to Run for Office

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Hit-and-Run Driver Busted by Alert Cop

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350 units of housing favored for former hospital

Neighbors say pleas ignored

by Carol Dimmick

Officials with the Presidio Trust signaled their preference for a plan that would give developers the green light to build up to 350 units of housing on the site of the former Public Health Service Hospital. The plan would preserve the environmentally-sensitive Battery Caulfield area.

The announcement followed the release of a 227-page Environmental Assessment that studied four alternatives for renovating the historic hospital building and comes at a time when the Trust was winding up negotiations with two developers for the right to build at the coveted site.

The plan the Trust favors, identified as Alternative Two in the assessment, allows developers to build 350 units of housing on the site, which is more than neighbors and environmentalists say is prudent. The plan would bring the Trust an amount in excess of the \$1 million annual rent it set as a goal. The Trust's board of directors will make a final determination concerning the development.

According to Hillary Gittelman, director of planning for the Presidio Trust, Alter-

Continued on page 2

Alexandria Theater sold, closes doors

The Alexandria Theater, a landmark in the Richmond District since 1923, was sold to a group of investors for \$6.5 million in February.

Plans for the 1,000 plus-seat triplex and its adjacent parking lot are not yet known, but the agent for a group of investors who brought the property, Patrick Lui, of Coldwell Banker, said the new owners will be making an announcement in the near future.

Lui would not confirm whether or not the new owners plan to replace the theater with a bank and retail stores and build housing on the theater's parking lot.

The fate of the popular theater has been a question mark

Following family footsteps



Photo: John Oppenheimer

San Francisco Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier settles into her new office at City Hall. She was chosen by SF Mayor Gavin Newsom to be his replacement as supervisor in District 2, which includes the Presidio and Laurel Heights, Seacliff and Lake Street neighborhoods. See story page 9.

Controller blasts Transportation Authority

by Carol Dimmick

City Controller Ed Harrington has accused the staff of a city agency that spends millions of dollars a year on transportation-related projects of playing fast

and loose with the public's money.

Harrington, who will soon release a financial audit of the San Francisco Transportation Authority (SFTA), told the members of its finance committee Feb. 24 that the agency's staff wrote checks without balancing its accounts, failed to reconcile its bank statements, kept money in unauthorized accounts and hired incompetent auditors that failed to report bad practices.

Members of the SF Board of Supervisors serve as commissioners for the agency.

Voters created the SFTA in 1989 when they passed Proposition B, which authorized a new half-cent sales tax increase to fund transportation projects. The agency is expected to spend \$1 billion over 20 years on a number of capital projects and its funds are required, by law, to be held in accounts with the city Treasurer.

Harrington's remarks came in connection with a request by Jose Luis Moscovich, the executive director of the SFTA, to authorize the agency to issue \$200 million in commercial notes to

raise enough capital to avoid stopping construction on the Third Street Light Rail Project.

During a discussion of the finances involved in raising the \$200 million, a verbal confrontation developed between Supervisor Fiona Ma and Moscovich over his refusal, and Ma's insistence, that a financial expert from the City work with him on the transaction.

Ma told Moscovich that she had serious concerns about the ability of his staff to provide

Continued on page 2

Hearing on fate of Central Fwy. Supervisor wants governor to halt project

by Carol Dimmick

In a move that caught some of his colleagues off-guard, SF Supervisor Bevan Dufty introduced a resolution in January asking Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to halt the rebuilding of the Central Freeway.

In mid-February, at a meeting of the SF Board of Supervisors, Dufty introduced a strongly-worded resolution asking the

governor to freeze more than \$90 million earmarked for rebuilding the freeway. The resolution also instructs the city to conduct further studies to explore the feasibility of moving on- and off-ramps back to Bryant Street.

Although the resolution was referred to committee for further review before a vote could be taken, Dufty's maneuver is sign that the freeway has, once again,

become a hot political item.

Supervisor Jake McGoldrick called Dufty's maneuver "unfair" and said it was an attempt by a colleague to circumvent the public process.

"I would call it an end-run around the process. People must have an opportunity to debate the issue. This was an attempt to quietly make a drastic change."

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Housing at former hospital

Continued from page 1

native Two was created to capture the proposals of the John Stewart Company and Forest City Development, the two competing developers. It rehabilitates the historic buildings at the site as well as the non-historic wings of the hospital.

Other alternatives would have allowed 210 residential units with an additional 190,000 square feet for education use; 230 units with the removal of the building's non-historic wings; and 269 residential units, about half of which would be located at Battery Caulfield.

All four of the alternatives would guarantee the Trust a minimum \$1 million in lease fees annually. The Trust is trying to become self-supportive under a mandate from Congress.

Craig Middleton, the executive director of the Presidio Trust, called the Trust's selection a moderate approach to developing the site that is sensitive to the neighbors.

"We think we have been responsive to the public's concerns," Middleton said.

He also stressed that while the Trust prefers Alternative Two, the plan could change with public input and during lease negotiations.

Neighbors Say Their Concerns Ignored

The Trust's announcement drew sharp criticism from leaders of several powerful neighborhood organizations, who represent residents living in an affluent neighborhood in the Richmond District just south of the hospital site.

Ron Miguel, president of the 1,600-member Planning Association for the Richmond (PAR), which has lobbied for a smaller project, said he was disappointed, but not surprised, by the Trust's preference for a large project.

"We had presumed all along that finances were going to drive this project," he said.

For months, neighbors have urged the Trust to drop the \$1 million requirement, which they claim ensures a large develop-

ment being approved for the site.

Claudia Lewis, president of Richmond Presidio Neighbors (RPN), says Alternative Two is out of character with the neighborhood, will create additional pedestrian safety issues and bring traffic gridlock to the area.

The RPN worked with The John Stewart Company, which put a proposal to build 190 condominium units at the site. Lewis said the neighborhood would support that plan.

"An all-condo development would be better suited to the neighborhood, as opposed to rental units and a smaller devel-

opment, and would have a lesser impact on plants and wildlife," she said.

According to Trust officials, the thrust of Stewart's proposal is contained in Alternative Three, but with an expanded housing-unit count. However, Miguel agrees that some of the elements contained in the proposal are there, but agrees the unit count is still too high.

"The unit count is drastically different. I am troubled by the disparity in the count," he said.

A public meeting will be held April 14 to discuss the project. Public comment closes April 30.

Incompetence charges at T.A.

Continued from page 1

competent financial advice because a recent financial audit of the agency uncovered a number of troubling irregularities. She proposed that the city provide his office with financial expertise as a requirement of approving the \$200 million transaction.

Ma also described a telephone conversation in which members of the agency's staff offered to alter records to eliminate accounting inconsistencies, which she said caused her great concern.

"They were not doing due diligence. They asked me, OK, what number do you want?" Ma said.

City Treasurer Susan Leal also warned commissioners not to approve the agency's request until her office had a chance to look over the terms of the deal. She repeatedly offered to act in an advisory capacity.

The most controversial testimony came from Harrington, who aimed his criticism at a staff he said lacked the elementary skills necessary to balance a checkbook.

"They are the worst agency I have ever audited. They could not do a bank reconciliation. All the numbers we looked at were wrong — they would just write checks," Harrington said.

Throughout the session Moscovich insisted he would be making periodic reports to the board about financial transactions, that his staff had the necessary expertise to advise him and that oversight by the City was unnecessary.

He also said that a preliminary report by Harrington showed no money was missing and accused Harrington's office of making a \$66 million error.

"There are two sides to these equations," Moscovich said.

In a recent interview, Moscovich clarified his position, saying he was never opposed to interim financial assistance from the

City, but was raising a concern that the agency should maintain its independence.

"We are a legally independent agency. The sales tax (that voters passed to create the SFTA) is based on the fact that we are an independent organization," he said.

Moscovich called Ma's and Harrington's allegations "troubling," but said it was premature to comment until the audit was completed. He also said the agency is undergoing a reorganization process and indicated that some positions will be eliminated to make the agency "stronger."

The Transportation Authority committee ultimately voted to authorize the sale of \$200 million in commercial notes, with the requirement that Monique Moyer, director of public finance for the city of San Francisco, provide interim financial record-keeping for Transportation Authority staff.

SFTA To Spend \$1 Billion Over 20 Years

Since its creation in 1989, the SFTA has spent more than \$713 million on projects, including \$19 million for street resurfacing, \$48.5 million for traffic signal upgrades and \$6.3 million for new traffic signals.

The agency is currently working on many important capital projects, including the Doyle Drive Project, which calls for replacing the southern approach to the Golden Gate Bridge, the Central Freeway Replacement Project and the Third Street Light Rail Project.

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GOLDEN GATE PARK MUSIC CONCOURSE

Construction Mobilization Scheduled to Begin in March

In March 2004, preparation will begin for construction of the Golden Gate Park Music Concourse underground parking facility. Construction of the underground parking facility is scheduled for completion in Fall 2005.

How the Construction Affects You

10th Avenue Closure
10th Avenue between Fulton Street and John F. Kennedy Drive will be closed during construction. Detour routes include entering/exiting the Park from 8th Avenue or Park Presidio. Directional signs will be in place.

Academy Drive & Tea Garden Drive Closure
Academy Drive and Tea Garden Drive between John F. Kennedy Drive and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive will be closed to all traffic during construction. Directional signs will be in place.

Music Concourse Area Bicycle & Pedestrian Access
The Music Concourse area will be closed to the public during construction.

Re-Routing of Muni 44 Golden Gate Park/O'Shaughnessy Bus
The closure of the Music Concourse roads during construction will require the temporary re-routing of the Muni 44 Golden Gate Park/O'Shaughnessy bus line to the perimeter of the Park.

The Golden Gate Park Concourse Authority is committed to minimizing the inconvenience to the community during construction. We appreciate your patience and cooperation.

Infoline (415) 831-2728 • Web site: www.GoldenGateParkConcourse.org

Council wants to minimize Rec. and Park cuts

The Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) is hosting a series of District Park Planning (DPP) meetings in each supervisorial district to generate ideas about maintaining city parks during a \$8.5 million budget shortfall. The NPC will also present findings from its recent open space study, "Green Envy: Achieving Equity in Open Space," at the meetings.

Sponsored by the NPC, District Park Planning is a forum for community members and representatives from the SF Recreation and Park Department to assess and improve the city's parks and recreation services in the city's neighborhood parks.

A meeting geared towards the Richmond District (District 1) will be held Thursday, March 25, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., in the Richmond Police Station's Community Room, located at 461 Sixth Ave.

Another meeting, for the Sunset and Parkside (District 4) districts, will be held Monday, March 4, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at the Sunset Recreation Center, located at 2201 Lawton St. (at 28th Avenue).

A meeting for the Twin Peaks, West Portal, Inner Sunset, Golden Gate Heights and Sunnyside neighborhoods (District 7) will be held Monday, March 8, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Stonestown YMCA Annex, located at 3150 20th Ave. (at Buckingham Way).

For more information, contact Justina at 621-3260 or go to www.sfneighborhoodparks.org.

Voicing concerns



Photo: Francis Da Silva

Richmond District resident Benny Lew voiced his concern about his granddaughters' safety on the neighborhood's streets at a Town Hall Meeting held at the Richmond Recreation Center Feb. 21. Supervisor Jake McGoldrick opened the meeting by saying San Franciscans live in one of the densest cities in the country and have a greater urgency to "push" for pedestrian safety and awareness, with the aim of achieving a "zero mortality rate."

Hearing on sewer rates

Throughout the month of March, the SF Public Utilities Commission's Rate Fairness Board will conduct a series of public hearings concerning proposed sewer rate recommendations.

Members of the public who attend the hearings can provide written comments on sewer rate policy recommendations and adjustments, which will become part of the public record.

Attend a hearing or write to: Rate Fairness Board, c/o SF Public Utilities Commission, 1155 Market St., 11th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103. A hearing for the westside will be held in the Sunset District on Wednesday, March 24, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the West Sunset Recreation Center, 3223 Ortega St.

For more information, call 554-1539.

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– Janie Ament, Richmond Resident



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Richmond Branch Library needs money for interior

The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library will be holding a Richmond Library Campaign Planning meeting on Thursday, March 4, at 6:30 p.m.,

to inform participants about the overall purpose and goals of the fundraising campaign and to begin the process of organizing a Richmond Library Capital

Campaign Committee. A light supper will be provided.

While the planned renovation of the Richmond Library is primarily funded through a bond approved by San Francisco voters in 2000, money for the interior of the library — furniture, fixtures, tables, chairs, lamps, desks and computers — cannot be provided by public bond funds. The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library aims to address this concern at the meeting.

The committee hopes to attract a representative group of Richmond neighborhood leaders and library advocates.

For more information, contact Marian Chatfield-Taylor at the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library at (415) 437-4859 or e-mail her at marian.ctaylor@friendssfpl.org.

'Guys and Dolls' at Presidio

The Drama Club at Presidio Middle School will perform the musical "Guys and Dolls" on Friday, April 2, at 7 p.m., in the school's auditorium.

Based on a Damon Runyon's short story, "Guys and Dolls" tells a humorous, romantic tale about gamblers, chorus girls and a Salvation Army band set in '40s New York City.

Student actors will sing, dance and play musical instruments in the classic, which was

one of the longest-running Broadway musicals in the '50s.

Presidio Middle School is located at 450 30th Ave., between Geary Boulevard and Clement Street. Tickets, \$6 for adults and \$3 for seniors/students, may be purchased at the performance or in advance by contacting anno@jps.net.

For more information about "Guys and Dolls," contact Jeanie Poling at (415) 386-6978.

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Valentine's stroll



Photo: Philip Liborio Gangi

Pat Sullivan takes advantage of a sunny, warm day to take a Valentine's Day stroll, with his wife and grandson Derek Harrison, along Lake Street, near 18th Avenue.

Mayor a no-show at merchants' luncheon

New SF Mayor Gavin Newsom was a no-show at the Greater Geary Boulevard Merchants and Property Owners Association luncheon Feb. 24 because he was on national radio and television shows defending his controversial decision to allow same-sex marriages. Newsom was supposed to be the keynote speaker at the event.

More than 400 people attended the luncheon, which was held at the Cathedral Hill Hotel.

At the luncheon, several long-time merchants and neighborhood leaders were honored for their community contributions, including: Ernie Louie, from

State Farm Insurance; Bert Bomersine, from the House of Flowers; Isabel Kazemi and Surveen Singh, from Richmond Vision Care; Dr. David Werdegard and Ken Donnelly, from the Institute on Aging; and Albert Levy, from Aladdin Rugs.

Ron Miguel, president of the Planning Association for the Richmond, and David Heller, president of the Geary Merchants Association, made presentations recognizing the merchants and the SF Police Officers Association, which showed a film about the arrest of a scam artist trying to take merchants on Geary Boulevard.

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Wanted: Concerned Citizens Police Beat

The Richmond District Community/Police Forum, Friends of Sutro Park, Coalition to Save Ocean Beach and other neighborhood associations invite residents, merchants and citizens to attend a special meeting on Tuesday, March 16. The focus is "traffic calming along Fulton Street."

There is a growing community concern that the traffic flow along Fulton Street, between Arguello Boulevard and the Great Highway, is unsafe for pedestrians, motorists and the neighborhood.

The SF Department of Parking and Traffic will present information on what a traffic-calming program entails. The group will discuss whether or not our community would commit to organizing and implementing a long-term, traffic-calming project on Fulton Street.

We need your input and commitment to this worthwhile project. Please mark your calendar and attend this meeting.

Good Arrest of Hit-and-Run Suspect

On Feb. 21, at about 10:15 p.m., officer Andy Wu was conducting a traffic stop at Third Avenue and Geary Boulevard when he heard a loud noise. Officer Wu turned his attention towards the noise and saw a white vehicle strike a pedestrian riding a skateboard. The vehicle fled from

Capt. Sandra Tong



the accident at a high rate of speed. Wu carefully pursued the hit-and-run vehicle but briefly lost sight of it. With the assistance of observant pedestrians, he identified the vehicle once again weaving in and out of traffic. Wu made a traffic stop at Geary and Funston Avenue and detained two occupants.

The pedestrian was treated and released for injuries to the right leg and right elbow. After a thorough investigation, the driver of the vehicle was arrested for felony hit and run, speeding and various traffic infractions.

Wu is to be commended for his keen observation and for safely pursuing and detaining the suspect's vehicle.

April Meeting

The Richmond District Community/Police Forum will be held on Tuesday, April 20, 1 p.m., at the Richmond Police Station. The tentative guest speaker will be from the SF Department of Public Health to discuss neighborhood code violations.

Capt. Sandra Tong is the commanding officer at the Richmond Police Station.

POLICE BLOTTER

Robbery with Gun: Feb. 3, 2:10 p.m., 2000 Block of Clement Street

A suspect walked into a rug store and asked the sales attendant questions about rugs and mattresses on sale. After 15 minutes, the suspect left the store, only to re-enter two minutes later.

The suspect turned his back to the attendant and put a black glove on his right hand. When he turned around to face the salesman, he was holding a black semi-automatic handgun in the gloved hand.

"Turn around and put your hands on the rug, or I'll shoot you," he said. The victim complied, placing his hands on a hanging rug on the wall behind him. When the victim pleaded with the suspect not to shoot him because he had two kids, the suspect replied, "I have two children too."

The suspect frisked the victim, taking his wallet before demanding to know where he kept "the big money."

When the victim said he did not keep large amounts of money at the store, the suspect looked in a drawer before taking off on foot.

Police who arrived at the scene found the victim in tears. A search of the suspect was to no avail.

Aggravated Assault with Weapon: Feb. 21, 2:30 a.m., 3700 Block of Geary Boulevard

A group of friends were having dinner at a restaurant when a group of five or six young male suspects began making rude comments to the victim and his friends. One of the suspects threw some food at the victims, causing one man in the crowd to shield his friends from the flying food. He was hit in the head by an unknown object.

The group of suspects fled the restaurant before police arrived. The victim was treated by medics and released at the scene.

Malicious Mischief, Graffiti, Real or Personal Property, Vandalism to Vehicle: Feb. 15, 8 a.m., 600 Block of 22nd Avenue

Police responded to a call about vandalism, in which five residences on a block were victimized. Somewhere between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m., the unknown suspect(s) sprayed black paint on the garage doors of five homes and on the passenger side of a car. One homeowner awoke to see the damage and alerted her neighbors. She said a similar crime had happened to her last year.

All the victims were given the number of the Graffiti Abatement program. Photographs were taken of the vandalized property.

Attempted Robbery, with Force: Jan. 8, 5:45 p.m., 200 Block of 18th Avenue

A 15-year-old male was waiting outside the Richmond Recreation Center when three suspects approached and demanded money.

The suspects pushed the victim against the wall and went through his pockets. The victim tried to break free but was pushed to the ground. Eventually, he was able to escape and call for help at the recreation center. The victim, who had his head pushed into a wall during the scuffle, was uninjured.

Police arrived and failed to find the suspects after a sweep of the area.

Burglary, Vehicle (Arrest made), Stolen Property, Possession with Knowledge: Feb. 2, 2:51 a.m., Near the Intersection of Blake and Anza Streets

A man heard a noise outside his home and looked to see one suspect inside a parked pickup truck and another suspect circling the vehicle with a metal pole. The man with the pole tried to pry the truck's camper shell open.

While the witness was on the phone with dispatch, he saw the suspect climb into the back of the vehicle.

Police arrived at the area of the break-in and with the assistance of the witness, drove past the vehicle to catch up with two suspects, who fled northbound on foot. The police officers drove northbound on Blake Street and apprehended the two suspects.

A computer criminal check on both suspects turned up an active probation for one of the suspects, prompting a warrantless search. The search turned up a set of motor vehicle master keys, a flashlight and a lighter, which the truck's owner later identified as his.

The witness positively identified the two suspects as the people he had seen breaking into the truck.

A trace of the truck's owner found that he lived across town and that the vehicle had earlier been stolen from Jones and Sutter streets and parked in the location where it was later burglarized. The vehicle was illegally parked when it was burglarized.

Both suspects were booked at Richmond Station.

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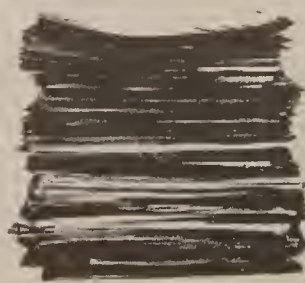
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In February, after many months of discussions with community stakeholders, I introduced an ordinance that addresses a challenging problem for city policy-makers, developers and residents of our neighborhoods. Increasingly, developers are asking the SF Planning Commission and the SF Board of Supervisors to allow them to exceed the density and height limits allowed under current zoning. Often, these projects are in areas undergoing comprehensive, community-based planning efforts that include rezoning the area.

For example, in January the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors gave approval to very large projects on Rincon Hill that greatly exceeded the densities and heights allowed under the zoning in place for that area. The project came before the board after repeated delays in completion of a Rincon Hill area rezoning plan. We have

faced many similar individual projects seeking exceptions to zoning limits while area planning efforts were in progress.

The Public Benefits Incentive Zoning ordinance would replace this piecemeal approach with predictable and systematic development standards for such projects. Public Benefits Incentive Zoning (PBIZ) would give developers incentives to build good housing, while recognizing the need to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of San Francisco's neighborhoods. PBIZ would also ensure that new development contributes to creating complete, vibrant and healthy neighborhoods. It would create a more predictable real estate environment by making clear the terms on which density "bonuses" would be permitted.



Benefits of rezoning

Supervisor Jake McGoldrick

PBIZ would replace the current permissive zoning in many districts, which has fueled a speculative real estate market and created uncertainty for businesses and communities. In addition, PBIZ will supersede fickle "spot zoning" and planned unit developments (PUDs), which are granted on a site-by-site basis and effectively increase land values without a clear public benefit requirement.

Moreover, since the PBIZ concept was born out of community planning processes, not only will new development better address public benefit goals but developers will also have greater certainty that their projects will receive important community support.

This ordinance would apply to developers requesting density or height increases above what is allowed under current zoning. PBIZ would create a framework for allowing increased density and/or increased height to be granted to a development site under certain circumstances. When a variance or rezoning (such as a "Special Use District") is requested by a developer, a new maximum development "envelope" for the lot would be determined, taking into account good design and sunlight issues.

If the developer wishes to build to this new, larger, maximum project size, PBIZ would require them to provide a public benefit in proportion to the additional floor area they receive. Public benefits would come from the following menu of options: affordable housing, preferably family-sized homes or senior homes, for-sale or rental; com-

munity-serving spaces, such as libraries or meeting rooms; public open space; or light industrial (production, distribution and repair) spaces, where appropriate.

Public Benefits Incentive Zoning provides a stark contrast to other recent efforts that would encourage development by offering density bonuses to developers. While PBIZ similarly creates a mechanism for allowing density and height bonuses, it includes four fundamental provisions that ensure it serves communities and neighborhoods, and not just developers: 1) PBIZ is being developed through a process of public discussions and consultations with supervisors, the SF Planning Department and the affected neighborhoods; 2) PBIZ gives precedence to local community planning processes, like the Better Neighborhoods program, to establish appropriate zoning and development standards; 3) PBIZ serves a range of low- to moderate-income residents who need housing that is affordable, both rental and homeownership; and 4) PBIZ is

based on the principle that it takes more than housing to build a healthy, balanced neighborhood.

This legislation promotes a win-win approach to foster good development for San Francisco. By forging a private/public partnership vision, we can offer private developers economic incentives and create the means to provide public benefits that will make their development more successful.

I look forward to a dynamic community dialogue with all stakeholders contributing their ideas and visions for the future of San Francisco.

Next Town Hall Meeting

I want to invite you to our next District 1 Town Hall Meeting to be held on Saturday, March 20, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Ave., between Clement and California streets. The meeting will focus on public safety issues in District 1. We have invited our new chief of police, Heather Fong, to join us and share her vision for keeping our community safe and secure. I hope you will join us.

Jake McGoldrick is a San Francisco supervisor representing District 1.

New Mini Medical School kicks off at UCSF in March

The University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) kicks off its sixth Mini Medical School – a six-week series of lectures every Wednesday, from March 17 to April 21 – focusing on the theme "learn and discover."

The Mini Medical School is open to the public and designed for people who want to learn more about science and the intricate workings of the human body. The course will meet at UCSF's Cole Hall, located at 513 Parnassus Ave., from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Each class features a one-hour lecture followed by a question-and-answer session.

Participants also have the option of signing up for "elective" classes on Saturday, April 3, that include one-hour visits to various UCSF Medical Center units and explanation of campus research and computer labs.

"Mini Med is structured to approximate some of the core

learning that health science students experience in their first two years of study," said Allan Basbaum, Ph.D., UCSF professor and chair of the Anatomy Department. He serves as Mini Med course director and series moderator.

The Mini Med faculty will include UCSF teachers and scientists who have received teaching awards. The faculty will discuss the latest findings in health sciences research and patient care.

Participants are not required to do homework or take exams. Tuition for the course is \$75. Space is limited to 400, so early registration is encouraged. Parking at the UCSF campus garage is \$3 per session.

For registration information, call the UCSF Public Affairs office at (415) 476-2557 or e-mail sgettys@pubaff.ucsf.edu. For more information about UCSF, visit www.ucsf.edu.

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RICHMOND ROUNDUP

Geriatric Depression Workshops to be held at UCSF

UCSF Mental Health Professionals are holding two discussions to help seniors identify and get help for symptoms of late life depression and how to cope with stress.

The first discussion, "Understanding Late Life Depression," will be held Friday, March 5, at 6:30 p.m., at the Langley Porter Hospital's auditorium, UCSF Parnassus Campus, located at 401 Parnassus Ave.

The other discussion will be held at the same location on Monday, March 8, at 3 p.m.

Specific services and programs for seniors at UCSF will also be discussed.

For more information about this program or other social services available to seniors, call (415) 476-7439.

Business Recycles Old Greeting Cards

Old holiday, birthday and other types of greeting cards can be donated to St. Jude's Ranch in Nevada, where the children living there cut them up and paste them onto a pre-printed card stock. The youths get 15 cents per usable card, which is put into a college or other fund for the youth.

St. Jude's Ranch for Children is a non-profit group that provides a home for abused, abandoned, neglected and other "at risk" children.

To donate cards, drop them off at the Standard 5&10, located at 3545 California St. in the Laurel Village Shopping Center. For more information, call 751-5767.

Become an International Folk Dancer

Chang's International Folk Dancers, the oldest operating folk dance club in the nation, invites couples and singles of all ages and levels to join its March dance group. The class encompasses music and dance from the Balkans, Israel, China, Finland, Sweden, Philippines, Scotland and the U.S.

The final evening of the three-Friday series is a "party night" of dancing, feasting on a potluck dinner and socializing. The group meets at the Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church Social Hall, 1329 Seventh Ave., Friday nights, 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., \$4 admission at the door. For more information, call 332-1020.

Public Urged to be Smart When Hiring Contractors

As Californians prepare their homes for the cold winter season with new roofs, insulation, outdoor lining, weather stripping and so on, the California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) is urging homeowners to exercise their rights in hiring and managing contractors.

Contractors who perform work on a project priced at \$500 or more must be licensed by the CSLB. CSLB has also just produced a new consumer guide, *Tips for Hiring a Roofing Contractor: A Consumer's Rights and Responsibilities*. This pamphlet gives consumers the basics on repairing versus replacing their roofs and the responsibilities of a roofing project. For

more information, call 1-800-321-2752 or visit the web site at www.cslb.ca.gov.

Ombudsmen Needed to Help Seniors

The California Department of Aging is expanding protections for people living in nursing homes by recruiting additional volunteer long-term care (LTC) ombudsmen, who will be trained and certified. The program plans to train hundreds of new ombudsmen to help nursing home residents, their families and friends understand and exercise nursing home rights guaranteed by state law.

Ombudsmen act as advocates to improve the quality of life for residents at LTC facilities, regularly visit local facilities, monitor conditions and provide support and resolve problems. In 2003, more than 1,400 ombudsmen statewide received complaints from nursing home residents and successfully resolved

more than 15,000 of them. For more information, call (800) 510-2020.

Exchange for Hazardous Thermometers

Helping rid households of a toxic but little known hazard, UCSF and the city of San Francisco have launched a program enabling residents to exchange mercury thermometers for safer digital versions at no cost.

Thermometers containing mercury, a liquid metal, have become an increasing environmental concern in recent years. The UCSF bookstore at 500 Parnassus Ave. is the first permanent safe disposal site in the City.

Thermometers can be exchanged during normal business hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, call 476-1666.

The Community Learning Center at St. James has New Classes and Events

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Saturday, March 13, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., \$5 fee

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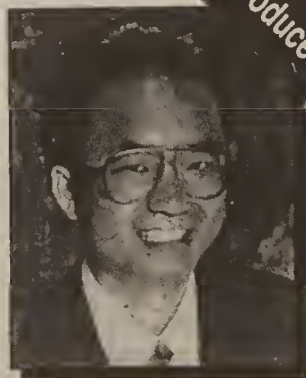
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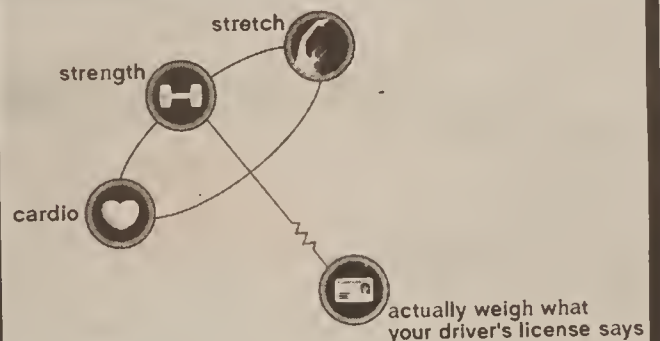


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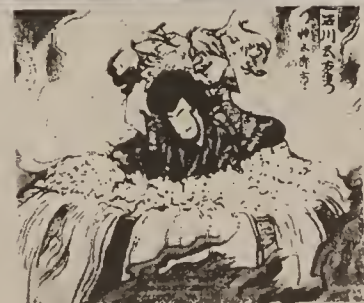
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In a surprise move, SF Supervisor Bevan Dufty introduced a resolution that would scrap what remains of the Central Freeway, a vital transportation link for westside residents.

For the last four years, city officials, in concert with Caltrans, have designed and started rebuilding the freeway back to Market Street, where it would connect to an Octavia Boulevard expressway linked to Fell and Oak streets. City voters approved the \$90 million plan in 1999 (Proposition 1). It is expected to be completed next year.

But Dufty tried to ramrod a resolution through the SF Transportation Authority that

would have asked Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to scrap the project and keep the money. The Transportation Authority is comprised of all of the members of the SF Board of Supervisors.

Fortunately, SF Supervisor Jake McGoldrick succeeded in getting the resolution shipped to the supervisor's Land Use Committee for a March hearing so westside residents could be heard.

According to a Strategic Analysis Report (SAR) prepared by Transportation Authority staff and adopted by the

Another fight over fate of Central Fwy.

Paul Kozakiewicz



Transportation Authority in February, if the freeway were scrapped now the effects would include:

- a loss of \$90 million in funding already secured to rebuild the freeway;
- an additional six years to complete a new project;
- a cost of \$173 million to \$238 million to revisit the Central Freeway project and rebuild it from scratch;
- the need for a 10-lane surface road to handle the 4,000 vehicles per hour in each direction traffic load;
- an increase in commuter travel times, not just to the westside, but also to the Castro District and Upper Market neighborhoods;
- delays for all vehicle traffic trying to cross Division, 13th and Octavia streets because traffic signals would have to remain green for long periods of time to

keep traffic moving on and off the shortened Central Freeway.

Other obvious effects of scrapping the Central Freeway include choking surface streets with vehicles,

particularly on South Van Ness Avenue and Ninth and 10th streets in the South of Market area, and significantly increasing the amount of air pollution residents would have to ingest. The area was a traffic nightmare when the freeway was temporarily closed in the mid-'90s.

As well, with only a nub of freeway coming down at Bryant Street, traffic would back up onto Highway 101, causing a dangerous situation on that important thoroughfare.

And there are economic consequences.

Merchants from Japantown and Hayes Valley told supervisors in February that they were already hurting financially and that scrapping the plan to bring the freeway down at Market Street would negatively affect their ability to make a living.

But, despite the numerous negative impacts associated with

the plan, the authors of the SAR report tried to paint the situation in a rosy light to augment Dufty's legislative-push through the supervisors.

In 1997, city voters said we should rebuild the Central Freeway back to Fell and Oak streets, the terminus for the freeway prior to the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake. Two ballot battles later, the Octavia Boulevard plan was settled on as the best option for Caltrans to move eastbound and westbound traffic quickly, safely and efficiently.

When city voters OK'd the Octavia Boulevard plan in 1999, many of the local people who worked to rebuild the Central Freeway decided not to go back to the ballot to try to rebuild the freeway back to Fell and Oak streets. Instead, we decided to try to make the plan work as best as possible to facilitate the needs of people traveling east and west.

The Board of Supervisors should vote to proceed with that plan and not let Dufty's bad faith effort to undermine the Central Freeway project succeed. Waiting another six years and throwing away \$90 million is not a prudent course of action, but stranger things have occurred at City Hall.

It is important that residents living in the westside voice their opinions at the Land Use Committee hearing, which will be held at City Hall on Monday, March 15, at 1 p.m.

Otherwise, an already bad situation will get progressively worse for San Franciscans trying to make a simple trip across town.

Paul Kozakiewicz is editor of the *Richmond Review* and *Sunset Beacon* newspapers.

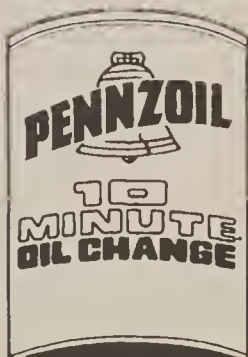
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Life, Learning & Laughter

New supervisor follows in family footsteps

by George McConnell

Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier's office on the second floor in City Hall is just around the corner from Room 200, where 30 years ago, her grandfather, Joseph L. Alioto, held court for eight years as mayor of San Francisco.

"I was close with my grandfather and he was very helpful to me," she said.

Alioto-Pier is a fifth generation San Franciscan who grew up in Pacific Heights. Her father, Joseph M. Alioto, is an anti-trust attorney. She attended local schools before enrolling at UCLA to study anthropology. As a member of a well-known and influential family, she is no stranger to the world of politics. Her aunt, Angela Alioto, is a former supervisor and mayoral candidate.

Alioto-Pier's exposure to public life made a deep impression and led to her decision to enter public service.

"I realized at an early age that government was a good place to get things done, and I had a desire to serve," Alioto-Pier said.

She began her career working for Vice President Al Gore as a domestic policy adviser on telecommunications policy.

In 1995, she launched the first of three campaigns when she moved to St. Helena and ran for the First Congressional District seat, which covers Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino counties. She captured the Democratic Party's nomination from a field of five candidates, but, in a hard and bitter race, failed to unseat incumbent Frank Riggs in the general election.

In 1998, she was her party's nominee for the office of secretary of state. In that race, she lost by just 1.1 percent of the vote to Republican Bill Jones.

In 2001, she ran again for secretary of state, but was beaten by former San Francisco supervisor and Assemblyman Kevin Shelley in the Democratic primary.

She served on the SF Port Commission from May 2003 until she was appointed supervisor for District 2 on Jan. 19 by Mayor Gavin Newsom. Her appointment filled the vacancy created when Newsom was elected mayor.

In a body known more for contentious disagreement, there was immediate consensus on the Board of Supervisors, even by the mayor's fiercest critics, that Newsom had made a smart choice.

"I wanted to appoint someone who can work with everybody," Newsom said.

District 2 is located on the northern tip of the San Francisco and encompasses Sea Cliff, the Presidio, Laurel and Pacific Heights, the Marina District and parts of Russian Hill.

"The lack of jobs is the main issue facing San Francisco today," said Alioto-Pier.

In District 2, she said education, jobs, traffic, utility undergrounding and the yacht harbor are priorities.

"I am glad to be here and I welcome



Photo John Oppenheimer

Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier in her office at City Hall on Feb. 17.

ideas and suggestions from my constituents," she said.

Alioto-Pier currently serves on the supervisor's City Services Committee. Salaries for San Francisco supervisors were recently raised to \$112,320 per year.

She suffered a tragic twist of fate in 1981 when she became paralyzed from the waist down as a result of a ski lift accident. Her disability, she said, did not deter her ambitions.

President Ronald Reagan appointed her to the President's National Council on Disabilities Advisory Board when she was 17 and she served as a delegate to the US-Japan Summit Conference on Disabilities.

Alioto-Pier uses a hand-operated wheelchair and drives a Jeep equipped with special hand-controls to get around.

"One of the positive things I have gained from my disability is a greater understanding and sympathy for others. Being in this position allows me to help with issues affecting the disabled," she said.

She lives with her husband, Thomas Pier, a third year law student, and their two children in Pacific Heights. She relaxes by reading and spending time with her family.

"Being a supervisor is a definitely a full-time job," Alioto-Pier said.

Like her predecessor, she is considered a moderate, but reiterates that she is not bound by Newsom's views because of her appointment. Her term expires in January 2005. In November, she is eligible to run for two consecutive four-year terms before being termed out as a supervisor.

"Running for office has given me the opportunity to meet lots of different kinds of people and exchange ideas and opinions. I have always been impressed that people really want to believe," Alioto-Pier said.

Alioto-Pier can be reached at her City Hall office at (415) 554-7752 or by e-mail at michela.alioto-pier@sfgov.org.

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Alexandria Theater closes doors

Continued from page 1

not allowed because of their dominance and proliferation.

"We are going to keep an eye on the Alexandria and, as details become available, we will examine our options," he said.

With the Alexandria closed, the Bridge, Balboa and Four Star will be the only three remaining neighborhood theaters in the Richmond District.

The single-screen Coronet Theater was purchased by the Institute on Aging in the summer of 2000 from United Artists. Plans are underway to build a low-income apartment complex with health and recreational services for senior citizens.

— Carol Dimmick



Photo: Philip Liborio Gangl

The Alexandria Theater, located on Geary Boulevard at 18th Avenue, closed its doors for good Feb. 16. Housing is planned to be constructed at the site of the theater and its parking lot.

Central Fwy. demolition proposed

Continued from page 1

he said.

McGoldrick predicted that Dufty's resolution, if adopted, would undo years of planning, jeopardize more than \$90 million in funding, undercut the Octavia Boulevard Plan developed to revitalize the Hayes Valley neighborhood and jeopardize more than 900 units of needed housing.

Supervisor Fiona Ma also weighed-in against the resolution.

"I am supportive of a long-term study, but we passed the project, funding is in place and I think we ought to finish it," Ma said.

The issue of how or even whether to rebuild the Central Freeway has been the subject of controversy for more than a decade.

After the freeway's structure was critically damaged by the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989, it took four ballot measures before voters approved Proposition 1, in 1999, and work could begin to rebuild the freeway.

The plan currently under construction calls for the freeway to be rebuilt from the 1-80/Highway 101 juncture to Mission Street, with on- and off-ramps that touch down on Market Street, at Octavia Street. The project is scheduled for completion in mid-2005.

At the center of the contro-

versy are the Market Street on- and off-ramps currently under construction.

Residents in the area say the removal of elevated structures over Market and Valencia streets brought a feeling of openness to the area which, in turn, prompted neighborhood groups, pedestrians and bicyclists to request relocating the ramps at Bryant Street.

But merchants and residents from Japantown, the Western Addition and Richmond and Sunset districts told members of the San Francisco Transportation Authority (SFTA) in February that they were suffering without the easy access the freeway brings.

"Our neighborhood has been harmed," said Linda Jofuku, a member of the Japantown Task Force. She told committee members that her organization was distributing a petition that opposes Dufty's resolution.

Critics of the resolution also contend the matter was settled at the ballot box and that Dufty's real motive for the last-minute maneuver to derail the project is to score points with a small, but vocal, group of opponents, many of whom live in his district.

"He is doing this to serve some of his constituents. We already tore down the Central Freeway – 98 percent of it. All we are trying to do is get a ramp," McGoldrick said.

Dufty admits he is taking a

second look at the project in response to concerns raised by his constituents, but he insists that slowing the project down to make sure good planning measures are in place makes sense.

"The neighbors had concerns that the openness created by re-

"We passed the project, funding is in place and I think we ought to finish it."

— Supervisor Fiona Ma

moving the freeway will be blighted by this structure," he explained.

Dufty Spearheads Two-Pronged Attack on Freeway

By introducing a resolution to scrap the Central Freeway, it was the second time in recent months that Dufty tried to stall the project.

Several months ago he asked the SFTA to study the feasibility of moving the ramps back to Bryant Street.

A report in response to Dufty's request was released in December that concluded that moving the ramps would trigger major traffic challenges, delay the project by as much as six years, more than double its cost and trigger legal and regulatory issues. The report was adopted by the Transportation Authority at its Feb. 24 meeting.

According to the 15-page report, entitled "Strategic Analysis Report on the Implications of Relocating the Central Freeway Touchdown Ramps," the financial implications alone are significant.

The report estimates that what is now expected to be a \$90 million project could wind up costing as much as \$193 million if the project is stalled.

Other potential challenges cited in the report include legal complications that would arise from the sale of some of the 23 parcels of land transferred to the city from Caltrans for the right-of-way for the project.

Editor's note: The resolution to ask the governor to scrap the Central Freeway project is scheduled to be debated at the SF Board of Supervisor's Land Use Committee at City Hall on Monday, March 15, at 1 p.m.

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In the 2000 census, more than 4.2 million Californians identified themselves as Asian, giving California the largest Asian and Pacific Islander population in all 50 states. For this reason, it is vital that we work together to address our shared needs and interests, continuing to add to the greatness of California. For hundreds of years, immigrants and their families have contributed to our economy, helped build strong communities and become vital members of our society.



APA Leadership: Now is the time

Assemblyman Leland Yee

With your support, on Feb. 10, I proudly became Speaker pro Tempore of the California State Assembly. The role of the Speaker pro Tempore is to lead the 80-member legislative body through the daily agenda of business on the Assembly floor, including debates and votes on legislation, and to serve as an integral member of the speaker's leadership team. I am honored to become the first Asian American to serve in such a prestigious role. I hope to set a precedent for my peers and future generations of Asian Pacific Americans to become leaders in our state and communities.

With Asian and Pacific Islanders among the fastest growing populations in California, it is imperative that we keep pace in terms of political representation. I will do my part in Sacramento to fight cultural insensitivity and encourage APA awareness of, and involvement in, government. I encourage you to do your part by making your voices heard on the issues that affect our community and supporting those candidates who will best meet the diverse needs of our state.

And, please remember to vote on Tuesday, March 2.

Leland Yee is Speaker pro Tempore at the California Assembly.

Unfortunately, our thriving Asian Pacific American (APA) community has been historically under-represented in state and local government. It is only recently that the numbers of APAs in government have begun to rise. There are currently seven APAs in the state Assembly, including myself: Wilma Chan (D-Oakland); Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park); Shirley Horton (R-Chula Vista); Carol Liu (D-La Canada Flintridge); Alan Nakanishi (R-Lodi); and George Nakano (D-Torrance). There are no APAs in the state Senate.

In San Francisco, we are proud to have individuals of Asian descent, such as District Attorney Kamala Harris and Police Chief Heather Fong, elected to high positions in our city government. Others, such as Congressman Mike Honda and Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta, have paved the way locally for APAs to serve on school boards, city councils and supervisory boards.

Network turns trash into treasure

The San Francisco Freestyle Network, which operates according to the old adage that "one person's trash is another person's treasure," has launched a new online group, and an accompanying message board, SFFN.

The program, which was established in December 2003 by Richmond District resident Jesamyn Angelica and hosted by

Yahoo Groups, aims to connect people who are looking to discard and acquire the same items. Items are listed free and no selling or trading is allowed.

To date, approximately 180 people have joined the program, mostly via word of mouth. To sign up or for more information, visit the website at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SFFN/>.

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Charity Cultural Services Center:
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Cole Hardware: 3312 Mission at 29th St.

Haight & Hayes Valley

Cole Hardware: 956 Cole at Parnassus Ave.
Roberts Hardware: 1629 Haight at Clayton St.

Marina & Cow Hollow

Fireside Camera: 2117 Chestnut St. at Steiner St.
Fredericksen Hardware: 3029 Fillmore at Union St.

Financial District

Front Ace Hardware: 195 Pine at Battery St.

Civic Center

Dept. of the Environment, EcoCenter: 11 Grove at Market St.

Potrero Hill/SOMA/Mission Bay

Appliance Sales: 840 Folsom at 4th St.
Cole Hardware: 70 4th St. at Mission St.
Rainbow Grocery: 1745 Folsom at Division St.

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Ace Handyman: 2075 Market at 14th St.

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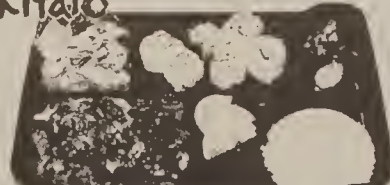


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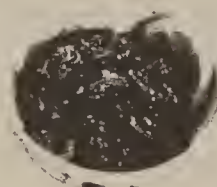


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Due to the lack of inventory and low interest rates in today's real estate market, buyers have to compete with each other and bid over the listed price to buy properties in San Francisco. It is a different mentality from the past, when buyers and sellers actually negotiated.

In the current seller's market, the advantage goes to the seller and buyers will have to know the market and what to do in order to become property owners.

Buyers have to know that if they win the bidding war, they will probably be the highest bidder on the property or close to it. This means that other people might not be willing to pay as much for the property. If you take the long-term perspective, looking back at today's prices 10 years from now, it will not make



Winning the bidding war

John M. Lee

a difference because prices will be much higher.

Also, keep in mind that the sooner you own a property, the sooner you can begin to write off the mortgage and property taxes, thus reducing your income taxes.

Here, then, are some hints on how to becoming the winning bidder in this current real estate market gone mad.

First of all, know the prices. Follow-up on all the current sales and know how much properties are selling for in the neighborhood you are interested.

Chances are you will be out-

bidded on several properties before you become the lucky one. Keep track of those properties and how much they sold for.

Generally, your agent can get you a pretty good idea by asking the listing

agent. That way, you will have a basis for comparison because most of the properties are currently selling for more than the list price and you need to know by how much.

Next, get pre-approved for a loan and submit a pre-approval letter with the offer. Sellers are looking for buyers who will give them the minimal amount of problems throughout the escrow process and after closing. If you can position yourself by demonstrating that you are credit worthy and understand the real estate selling process, you will be in a much better position.

Prior to the offer date, go through and approve all the disclosures on the property. This in-

Richmond Homes Sold in February*

Address	BR	BA	Square. Ft.	Price
652 44th Ave.	2	1.00	1,145	\$691,000
559 38th Ave.	3	2.50	1,465	792,000
191 Stanyan St.	3	1.25	1,705	890,000
135 Ewing Terr.	3	2.00	2,025	1,220,922
743 14th Ave.	3	2.50	3,005	1,567,000

* Partial listing of homes sold in the Richmond District. Source: M.L.S.

dicates to the seller that you have done your homework and are ready to perform. Check the inspection reports. If they come from a reputable company, perhaps waiving inspections might be appropriate and give you advantage on your competition. If there are no inspections or you must have your own inspections, perhaps shortening the contingency time period will be beneficial.

Have your agent find out how many offers are expected on the presentation date. If there is quite a bit of interest or not that much, you can adjust your offer accordingly. Also, find out the seller's strategy from the listing agent. Some sellers and listing agents will counter the top offers, while others will accept the best one. This will tell you whether you need to go all out on the first round or if you will get a second chance for being one of the top bidders. Ask the listing agent what is important to

the sellers. Is a long or short close of escrow important? Are rent-backs necessary? What time frame would be acceptable?

And lastly, work with a reputable and likeable agent. Many deals are put together by agents who have worked well together in the past.

It is currently a tough real estate market for buyers. You will have to be mentally tough and be unattached to the property until you purchase it. It is hard because buyers purchase homes out of emotions, and when it does not work out, they can become devastated. But there will be others and, eventually with persistence and guidance, you will become a proud homeowner in San Francisco.

John M. Lee is a top-selling residential real estate broker at Pacific Union's California Street office. If you have any questions, call him at (415) 447-6231 or e-mail johnlee@isellsf.com.

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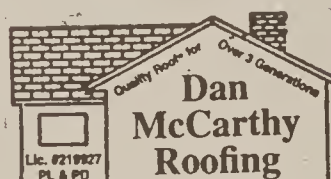
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Washington student wins student speakers contest

Bradley Dunn, a senior at George Washington High School, was the winner of the Park Presidio Lions Club's annual student speakers program. Dunn wins a \$50 stipend and moves on to compete at the next level in the Lions student speakers contest.

Jean Li, a freshman at St. Ignatius College Preparatory High School, and MacAllister Jeffrey, a freshman at Archbishop Riordan High School, also participated in the competition. Both received a \$25 stipend.

All of the 67th annual Lions' Student Speakers Program participants are allowed up to 10 minutes to present a position concerning various topics. This year's topic was entitled,

"Democracy - Is it for everyone?"

Judges for the Park Presidio Lions' competition were: Victoria Hutchings, a nationally-ranked debater working in theater; Sophie Clavier, an international relations professor at SFSU; and Kevin Samples, a retail management executive.

Exhibition at Presidio

The National Park Service is hosting an exhibit at the Presidio Officer's Club featuring the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The exhibit, open Wednesdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., runs through April 18. For more information, call 561-4404.

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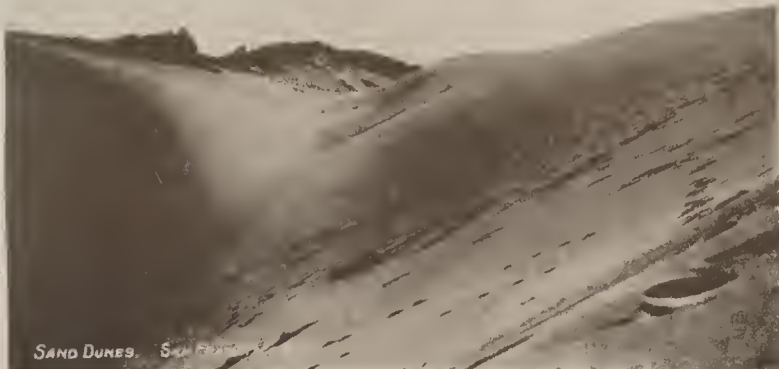


Photo courtesy of Greg Gaar collection

This photograph shows what most of the Richmond and Sunset districts looked like at the turn of the 20th century – massive sand dunes with coastal scrub habitat.

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The biggest safety issue in the Richmond is not murder, rape or other violent crimes; it is pedestrian safety. Geary Boulevard (west of Van Ness Avenue) has been ranked the third most dangerous traffic arterial in the city.

The fatality of a senior citizen in September at 47th Avenue and Fulton Street and another at Park Presidio Boulevard and Lake Street in January point to the pedestrian safety crisis that faces our neighborhood.

We are blessed by our easy access to the Golden Gate Bridge, Ocean beach, Golden Gate Park and the Presidio. Many commuters and tourists as well as local drivers race through the neighborhood on their way to these attractions, or just to get to work and back home.

How do we assure the smooth flow of traffic and also make pedestrians safer?

1) We need increased enforcement of traffic laws. Speeders and red light runners must be stopped. Statistics show that 80 percent of the pedestrian injuries on Geary in our neighborhood were due to driver fault. This is much higher than other neighborhoods. Captain Sandra Tong at the Richmond Station is to be commended for her decision in February to devote one officer a day to traffic enforcement, with 130 moving violations being issued in the first week.

2) We need more effective traffic engineering. We should synchronize lights on Fulton and Geary so that if a driver sticks to the speed limit, one can proceed quickly into town, but if one speeds, he or she will simply wind up waiting at the next light.

3) We need to increase the visibility of stop signs. On streets such as Fulton, we should install larger-sized stop signs and explore putting stop signs on both sides of the street throughout the Richmond.

4) We need to increase the visibility of pedestrian crossings. We should consider installing flashing crosswalk lights at dangerous locations where previous fatalities have taken place and study the effectiveness of yellow striping at crosswalks.

5) We need better safety education of pedestrians, bike riders and drivers.

6) We need better coordination of the multitude of pedestrian safety efforts already in existence.

Join me at the Richmond Police Station on March 16, at 7 p.m., to discuss how to develop a proposed traffic-calming plan on Fulton Street.

Matt Tuchow

Editor:

There are a number of attempts abroad these days to dragoon the authority of science in an effort to lend critical respectability to superstition. One of these is called "Intelligent Design Theory," which is a thin attempt to disguise fundamentalist religion as physics and biology. We see school systems under attack all across the US, as the religious right attempts to infect public school science classes with bias.

Now we apparently have Assemblyman Leland Yee attempting to do a similar thing with Feng Shui (Richmond Review, February) with his Assembly Concurrent Resolution 144.

Feng Shui is not science. It does not partake of geology, astronomy, physics, or even of ergonomics, as Yee apparently has it. It proposes a spiritual energy which is channeled by the association of physical spaces and objects. This is not part of any science, and is not supported by any science.

Legislating this superstition into California building standards makes a mockery of the rational objectivity that should inform our structural codes. Maybe, next, we can legislate that a shaman should shake rattles at every new structure, in order to propitiate other sorts of spirits in which Yee may not believe, but which are an article of traditional and passionate faith to some other group.

Cultural sensitivity does not extend to legislating superstitions, but to eliminating inequality before the law. Where does this end? If the door is opened to one sort of foolishness, how do we close it to others?

Patrick Frank, Ph.D.
Palo Alto, CA

Editor:

I have to take issue with a recent column by Assemblyman Leland Yee.

He refers to Feng Shui as "an Earth science that examines mathematics, physics, geology, astronomy and architecture, among other sciences." According to the California State Framework on Science, "A scientific theory must be logically consistent and lead to testable predictions about the natural world."

The theories of Feng Shui are not part of the scientific body of knowledge. I do not think that it is wise for our elected representatives to undermine the proper understanding of science.

Jonathan Frank
Science Department Chair
Abraham Lincoln High School

Editor:

Sutro Elementary School (K-5) is located in the Richmond District. Due to California's current fiscal crisis, our already meager budget is due to be cut for the next school year. We need to raise \$60,000 simply to maintain our current educational staff. Otherwise, we will be forced to reduce our teaching staff or eliminate our paraprofessional staff – either of which would have a negative impact on our students. We dedicate ourselves to providing a safe, encouraging, learning environment for all of our 250 children, but we need help to continue to do so.

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March Calendar of Events

1 – 7

"Unframed:" An art exhibition presenting portraits of women by four local female artists, Janet Allinger, Alissa Kaplan, Lori Markman and Leslie Ncmour, is on display at the USF Thacher Gallery, located in the Gleeson Library/Geschke Center on USF's main campus at 2130 Fulton St., open during library hours, free. For library hours, call 422-2044. For more information, call 422-5178.

Panoramic Spectacle: An exhibition presented by the National Park Service is on display through Sunday, April 18, at the Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Ave., Wednesdays to Sundays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., free. Additional Wednesday night programs, held at 7 p.m., with extended gallery hours preceding the programs, March 3 – postcards and collectibles; March 10 – scintillators and jewels; March 17 – relics of the Jeweled City; March 24 – architecture of palaces and courtyards; March 31 – Army and the Presidio, Fort Mason, and the PPIE. For more information, call 561-5500.

International Women's Day Briefing: The UCSF Women's Global Health Imperative hosts a public briefing with the theme "Women, poverty and HIV: Science to Action," Commonwealth Club, 595 Market St., Monday, March 8, 5:30 p.m., \$15 general admission, \$9 club members. For more information, call 731-5539.

8 – 14

Reading: Richmond District author Craig Carrozzini, the featured performer at Writer's Night, will read from, "The Curse of Chief Tenaya," an open microphone for the spoken word follows, Bazaar Cafe, 5927 California St., Monday, March 8, 7 p.m. For more information, call 921-5415 or 831-5620.

Presidio Architecture Talk: Trust historian Randolph Delehanty, Ph.D. will speak during a slide show presentation about the domestic architecture of the Presidio, no reservations required, 45 Moraga Ave.,

Tuesday, March 9, 7 p.m., free. For more information, call 561-5500.

Neighborhood Meetings: SF General Hospital hosts a meeting to discuss the rebuilding of the hospital and its trauma center to meet higher seismic safety mandates at either the current site on Potrero Avenue or at Mission Bay, 2789 25th St., Rooms 2001 to 2003, Wednesday, March 10, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., free. For more information, call 206-5784.

Banking Tips: Learn how to minimize bank fees, maximize interest rates, avoid penalties, and which types of accounts are best, San Francisco Senior Center, 890 Beach St., Thursday, March 11, 11 a.m. For more information, call 775-1866.

Gray Cabaret 2004: The Senior Action Network presents its annual benefit of song, dance, music and other acts, Castro Theatre, 429 Castro St., Thursday, March 11, 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., \$10 general admission. For more information or advance tickets, call 546-1333.

Computer Class: Learn how to use the secret buttons on a computer keyboard, manage files, load software and maintain a computer, San Francisco Senior Center, 890 Beach St., two-hour sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays, first class begins on Friday, March 12, at 1:30 p.m., \$50. For more information, call 775-1866.

15 – 21

Comedy Night: The Richmond District YMCA hosts a comedy night fundraiser, Punchline Comedy Club, 444 Battery St., Monday, March 15, 8 p.m., \$12. For more information, call 666-9622.

Melody of China: Hong Wang and Yanqing Zhao play traditional Chinese musical instruments, Sunset Branch Library, 1305 18th Ave., Monday, March 15, 7 p.m., free. For more information, call 355-2808.

Bouquets to Art 2004: Floral designers present floral tributes at a fundraising event to benefit the Fine Arts Museums of San

Francisco's special projects, acquisitions, exhibitions and educational programs. The Opening Night Preview Party with buffet, bar and silent auction will be on Monday, March 15, at 6 p.m. The following three days (Tuesday, March 16, to Thursday, March 18) will feature lectures, flower arranging demonstrations, luncheons, fashion shows and afternoon teas, all events require reservations. For more information, call 750-3504.

Healthy Kids Day: A free event sponsored by the Richmond District YMCA, featuring camp sign-ups, smoothie making, kid aerobics, bouncie, Richmond YMCA, 360 18th Ave., Saturday, March 20, 8 a.m. to noon. For more information, call 666-9622.

22 – 31

Homeopathy Seminar: Learn how to use homeopathic remedies at this introductory seminar sponsored by the Pacific Academy of Homeopathy, 1199 Sanchez St., Wednesday, March 24, 7 p.m., free. For more information, call 695-2710.

Lizard Lady: Children ages six and older are invited to see Teressa Killeen, the "lizard lady," at the Richmond Branch Library, 351 Ninth Ave., Friday, March 26, 4 p.m., free. For more information, call 557-4277.

Family Campfire Talk: Dress in layers and join "Juan Bautista de Anza" for a living history campfire in which the Anza Expedition from Mexico to San Francisco in 1776 will be recalled, Presidio, Crissy Field Center, Saturday, March 27, 6 p.m., \$5. For more information or to register (mandatory), call 561-7752.

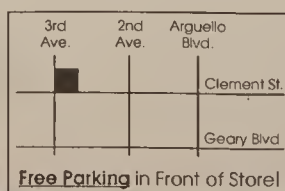
Presidio House Tours: Walk at your own speed and let the Main Post officers' quarters and barracks tell a story of domestic life on the post from the 1840s to 1917, no reservations required, Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Ave., Saturday, March 27 and April 3, Sunday, March 28 and April 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., free. For more information, call 561-5414.



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People install solar energy systems for two reasons. One is emotional, the other financial. So San Francisco is rolling out a

new program that can help you be an environmentalist and still have it pencil out.

The program is called Generation Solar and its goal for the year is to install solar power systems on 100 homes and commercial buildings. We intend to make the best products, best practices and attractive financing plans available to participants.

Our ultimate goal is to install 10,000 solar rooftops in San Francisco, which could meet about 10 percent of the city's energy needs and help make the City energy-independent.

The emotional reasons for installing solar are obvious. It's clean, green and you can feel great about not getting your energy from a fossil-fuel-based source that spews toxic pollution into the air.

The economic arguments are many. Many real estate specialists argue that every dollar spent on solar power adds \$21 to your property value. State incentives pay up to 50 percent of the installation cost. You can become energy independent and are buffered from future rate increases. And once you've paid for installation, the energy it produces is free – and a solar power system can last for at least 25 years!

Generation Solar aims to put the right sized system on each roof so your metered electricity use averages out close to zero.

Asian Film Fest in March

The 22nd annual SF International Asian American Film Festival, featuring Sunset District filmmaker James Hou, runs March 4 through March 11 at the AMC Kabuki 8 and Castro theaters.

For a schedule or more information, call 865-1588 or visit the website at www.naatanet.org/festival.

Why buy solar this year?

Peter O'Donnell

So instead of paying large monthly utility bills, you'll make payments to pay down your new solar system. While every situation is a little differ-

ent, the average time to payback is 6 years on a commercial system and 9 to 12 years for a home.

Another benefit of Generation Solar is that you'll get a new NetMeter electricity meter that runs backwards.

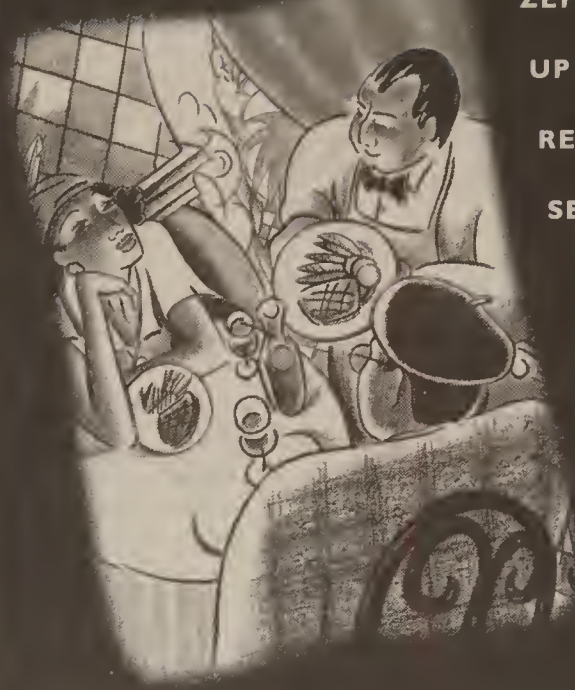
On sunny days, your solar system will put power back onto the grid. You'll actually get credited for the energy you generate.

And don't go thinking that San Francisco is too foggy for solar. There are homeowners in the misty Sunset District who have solar power – and utility bills under \$5 per month! Believe it or not, the City has only 10 percent less sunshine than Sacramento. Even on dismal days, there can be enough ambient light bouncing around to run solar panels at 20 to 30 percent capacity.

Generation Solar is lining up installers, designers, distributors and manufacturers to provide cost-efficient solar power systems. We are talking to private lenders and banks to negotiate attractive interest rates. We plan to start interviewing homeowners and conducting roof inspections in April and May. Installations may begin as early as June.

To register for the program online, please visit www.SolarSF.org. To register by phone, call SF Environment at (415) 355-3715.

Peter O'Donnell is a renewable energy specialist at San Francisco's Environment Department, where he manages the Generation Solar program. Learn more about how SF Environment is protecting and preserving the City's environmental well-being at www.sfenvironment.com. Visit the EcoCenter at 11 Grove St. or call (415) 355-3700.



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Fogbelt Studio (in the Parkside/Sunset) offers fine arts and crafts classes for all levels and all ages. For brochure: www.fogbeltstudio.com or call (415) 661-8502.

CARPENTRY/PAINTING
Decks, Stairs, Dryrot, remodeling kitchens and bathrooms, electrical and plumbing, seismic/structural, tile and masonry, roof repairs, tree trimming/hauling. Call Jim Kennedy at 661-3724. Lic. #751689.

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Garage Wanted in Richmond or Sunset Area. For storage of car. (415) 775-1580.

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Handyman Services: Carpentry, plumbing and electrical. All types of home repair and service. Clean, courteous and reliable. Call (415) 752-7835.

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MENTORS NEEDED

Enterprise For High School Students needs volunteer mentors to work one-on-one with high school students to help them develop job skills and explore careers. For more information, call 896-0909, ext. 304.

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RESEARCH HELP NEEDED

UCSF Research on Yoga for People diagnosed with COPD (emphysema): Would you like to attend a free yoga program? Call 476-5375 or e-mail dyspnea@itsa.ucsf.edu.

WANTED

Buying Older-Style Furniture and Household Items. One item or entire home. Give us a call at (415) 621-4390 – Jim.

WOMEN SINGERS SOUGHT

We Are Seeking Women Singers! Visit a rehearsal of the San Francisco Sound WAVE Chorus and learn to sing in the

barbershop style. Our 34-member women's chorus rehearses every Thursday from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Simon Auditorium at Laguna Honda Hospital at 375 Laguna Honda Blvd. All are welcome. For more information, call 665-7960 or visit www.sfsoundwave.org. Bring a friend.

VEHICLE DONATIONS

The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation is seeking vehicle donations to support its assistance to children and adults suffering from inflammatory bowel diseases. Free pickup and towing possible. For more information, call (650) 578-6590.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Experience Corps is looking for mentors and tutors for Richmond and Sunset district children. For more information, call Janet Oh at 759-3690 or go to the website at www.experiencecorps.org.

Little Brothers: Friends of the Elderly is looking for volunteers to commit to visiting a senior twice a month for a year. For more information, call the volunteer coordinator at 771-7957.

Help Needed at SF Food Bank: The RSVP and food bank needs help to assemble, stock and label food for distribution. For more information, call RSVP at 731-3335.

Anti-Rape Activists Needed to support sexual assault survivors. San Francisco Women Against

Rape Crisis Counselor Training for Women of Color. For more information, call (415) 861-2024, ext. 311.

Strybing Arboretum & Botanical Gardens in Golden Gate Park needs volunteers to work in the gardens, in the nursery and at special events. For more information, please call Lynn Duncan, volunteer coordinator, at (415) 661-1316, ext. 312, or e-mail her at Lduncan@strybing.org.

The JFCS Needs Volunteers to provide free bags of much-needed fruits and vegetables to a variety of people in need. Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon. For more information, contact Suzy Varadi at (415) 449-3824.

School Volunteers Needed: San Francisco School Volunteers assist students with a variety of tutoring needs. Free training and placement. For more information, call SFSV at (415) 749-3700.

Volunteers Needed to Work with Special Needs Children at the SF Unified School District. Orientation and training. For more information, call (415) 920-5165 and ask about being a surrogate parent volunteer.

Shanti Volunteers make a difference in the life of someone living with HIV disease or AIDS. For information, contact Nicola Curtin at 674-4722.

Volunteers for Special Needs Children are needed at the SF Unified School District. For more information, call (415) 920-5165.

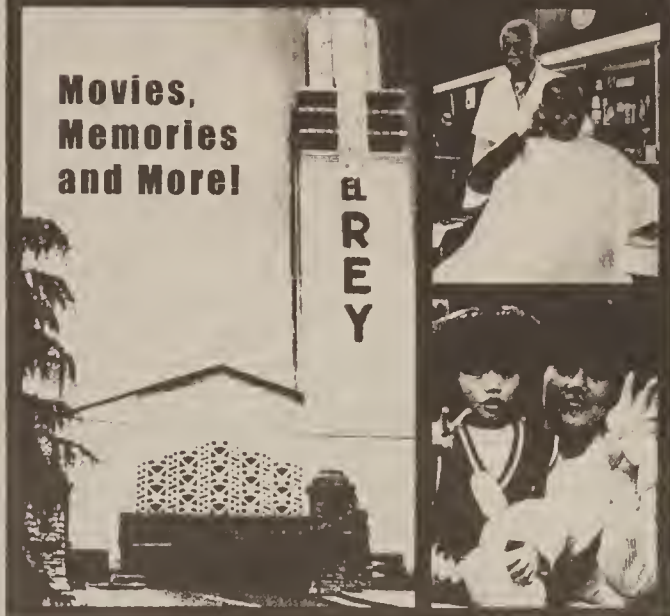
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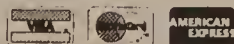
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